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Oxford Dec. 30. 1845-

Rev. A. A. Phelps.

My very Dear Brother

I cannot resist the strong desire I feel to drop you a line, and yet I have nothing to say except.

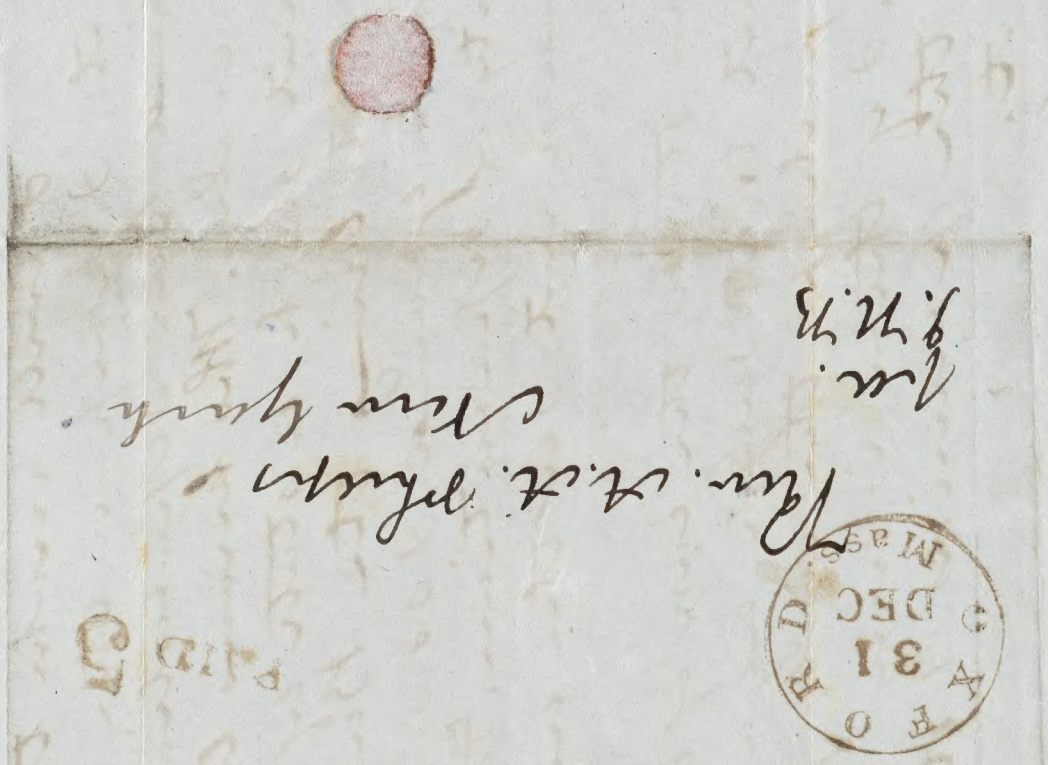
(1) To express the high degree of gratification which I and many others feel in view of the matter of your controversy with Dr. B. To me it seems that you have got, & are getting into the very marrow of the whole thing. The controversy is taking the right turn - is bringing the christian public to look at slaveholding as a simple naked thing, as individual & personal in its moral character as any other violation of God's law; & to undertake to screen it from odium by throwing around it the shield of a new & learned nomenclature must prove a signal failure. Push the matter on, therefore. Take all the time you want to make thorough work of it, & give yourself full scope. Divine providence has thrown this business into your hands, & until the controversy closes it must be your main

employment, & all surrounding & attending circumstances operate to fix thousands & tens of thousands of eager eyes upon you at this time. & your articles will be extensively read, especially in all the southern churches. With Bible argument, & grave, & no, more than one at a time infinitely less favorable to serious attention, & an extensive reading. Indeed, my dear brother, you have now a noble opportunity, an opportunity never before presented to "justify the ways of God to man," in reference to this great matter. Push, therefore, the truth, the whole truth, the naked truth home to the heart of the churches, & great & glorious, must ultimately, will be the results. As before stated, give yourself ample time, & ample scope for the work in hand. It is not a mere ephemeral newspaper squabble in which you are engaged. It is a controversy to settle, & settle forever, great principles of practical truth & righteousness; and of course, after you get through, your articles must be embodied in pamphlet, or book form for preservation and reference.

(2) As the controversy between us & the Board has taken this new turn. I doubt whether it is best to go on now with a new distinct Missionary organization. Indeed it strikes me that it is not best. This discipline may well use up the year before us. I will make thousands of converts. I prepare the whole public mind for separation, if it must at last come. Who knows but we may bring out such a state of public sentiment as to bring the Board to the right ground. I so see the necessity of separation. For our encouragement, see the action of Western synods.

(3) How stands the case of brother Jenny? I expect to go south again in a few days — perhaps the early part of next week. & if there is any thing I can do in the premises I should be glad to do it.

Very affectionately
Yours for the slave
J. N. Barkum

Rev. I. R. Barbour,

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